of wheat was imported from USA. During 89-90 and 90-91 no wheat was imported. So far during 91-92 no wheat has been imported. The Government have, however, as informed by Ministry of Food, recently decided to import one million tonnes of wheat with a view to increase its availability and to contain the prices in the open market.

Construction of Docks for Repair of Ships

1762. SHRIMATI GIRIJA DEVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present arrangements of repairing the ships are not adequate; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to build docks for the repairs of ships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) While due to budgetary constraints, it may not be possible for the Government to invest in the creation of new shiprepair facilities, Government would encourage the setting up of such facilities in the private sector or joint sector with the participation of State Governments.

The Port Trusts have been advised to provide necessary land and water-front areas to the prospective entrepreneurs to set up ship repairing facilities in their respective Ports.

[*English*]

Production of Defence Equipment

1763. SHRI CHANDRAJEET YADAV:
SHRI SIMON MARANDI:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time schedule has been framed by the Government for increasing the Defense production;

(b) whether any foreign country has been approached for joint collaboration for defence production;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to reduce the cost of production of defense items?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Consistent with the annual allocation funds and the prioritised requirements of the Services, itemwise annual targets are set. Achievement of such targets is monitored periodically.

(b) and (c). Some of the items under current production are being manufactured in technical collaboration with foreign countries, it is not in the public interest to disclose the details in this regard.

(d) Steps in this behalf include inventory control, optimisation of capacity utilisation, economy measured like energy conservation, value engineering etc.

[*Translation*]

Expansion of RRBs Activities in New Areas

1764. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to expand the activities of Regional Banks in the new areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?